

LISTING OF THE CLAIMS

Claim 1 (previously presented): A data conversion rule switching device, connectable with a target device in which a plurality of software are activated, which switches data conversion rules in accordance with a target software to be controlled in order to control anyone of said plurality of software in response to operation of a plurality of controls provided outside or inside the data conversion rule switching device, said data conversion rule switching device comprising:

a plurality of data communication ports each of which is for communicating with one of said plurality of software activated in said target device and transmitting operation data corresponding to operation of the plurality of controls and generated in response to the operation of said one of the plurality of software;

an assignor for assigning the plurality of data communication ports one by one to each of the plurality of software, respectively;

a setter for setting one data conversion rule suitable for control of the software assigned to the data communication port, for each of the plurality of communication ports, according to an instruction from a user, wherein every data conversion rule set for the data communication ports is different from each other;

a selector for selecting a data communication port from among the plurality of data communication ports, according to an instruction from a user;

a converter for converting operation data corresponding to operation of the plurality of controls and generated in response to the operation in accordance with the data conversion rule set for the selected data communication port; and

a sender for sending the converted operation data to the selected data communication port.

Claims 2 and 3 (canceled)

Claim 4 (previously presented): A data conversion rule switching device according to claim 1, wherein the target device can be connected to the data conversion rule switching device via a physically single cable, and transmission of operation data utilizing the plurality of data communication ports is performed via the cable.

Claim 5 (previously presented): A method of switching between a plurality of data conversion rules in accordance with a target software to be controlled in order to control anyone of a plurality of software activated in a target device in response to operation of a plurality of controls, said method comprising:

- a step of preparing a plurality of data communication ports each of which is for communicating with one of said plurality of software activated in said target device and transmitting operation data corresponding to operation of the plurality of controls and generated in response to the operation of said of the plurality of software and assigning the plurality of data communication ports one by one to each of said plurality of software, respectively;

- a step of setting one data conversion rule suitable for control of the software assigned to the data communication port, for each of the plurality of data communication ports, according to an instruction from a user, wherein every data conversion rule set for the data communication ports is different from each other;

- a step of selecting a data communication port from among the plurality of data communication ports, according to an instruction from a user;

- a step of converting operation data corresponding to operation of the plurality of controls and generated in response to the operation in accordance with the data conversion rule set for the selected data communication port; and

- a step of sending the converted operation data to the selected data communication port.

Claim 6 (previously presented) A machine-readable medium containing program instructions executable by a computer and causing said computer to execute:

a process of preparing a plurality of data communication ports each of which is for communicating with one of a plurality of software activated in a target device and transmitting operation data corresponding to operation of a plurality of controls and generated in response to the operation of said one of the plurality of software, and assigning the plurality of data communication ports one by one to each of said plurality of software respectively;

a process of setting one data conversion rule suitable for control of the software assigned to the data communication port, for each of the plurality of data communication ports, according to an instruction from a user, wherein every data conversion rule set for the data communication ports is different from each other;

a process of selecting a data communication port from among the plurality of data communication ports, according to an instruction from a user;

a process of converting operation data corresponding to operation of the plurality of controls and generated in response to the operation in accordance with the data conversion rule set for the selected data communication port; and

a process of sending the converted operation data to the selected data communication port.